



News Release

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Utah Communities Make Health a Priority

(Salt Lake City, UT) – Making healthy choices is a lot easier when your neighborhood is designed to help you do so. At the Utah League of Cities and Towns Annual Convention September 16, leaders from five cities and towns received “A Healthier You” Community Awards to recognize their achievements in making their communities healthy places to live. The Awards are part of the Utah Department of Health’s (UDOH) “A Healthier You” Legacy Program created in conjunction with the 2002 Olympics. They were designed to encourage schools, worksites, and communities to make changes that promote healthy behaviors.

Communities qualify for the awards by implementing policies, developing infrastructure, and conducting evaluations related to several areas, including physical activity, nutrition, tobacco control, and emergency services. The following communities received:

Platinum Level

Price City: Price adopted an ordinance prohibiting tobacco use at city events such as the farmer’s market, and sponsors “Community Walks” and “Mayor Walks and Talks” where participants can exercise in specific outdoor areas and receive healthy rewards and recognition.

St. George: St. George prohibits smoking in parks and has an ordinance requiring new subdivisions to have sidewalks and lighting. The city also has a master transportation plan that promotes active lifestyles, and policies to develop and manage a farmers’ market.

Hooper City: Hooper adopted ordinances for sidewalks and lighting in new subdivisions, prohibits smoking in parks, developed a master plan to promote active lifestyles, is working with the Safe Routes to School program, and increased pedestrian access to its Senior Centers.

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Gold Level

Heber City: Heber has a requirement for new subdivisions to install lighting and sidewalks, a transportation plan to promote active lifestyles, a Safe Routes to School program, and Senior Center pedestrian access improvements. In addition, the city saw an increase in the number of youth wearing helmets while biking, skateboarding and rollerblading and prohibits smoking in parks.

Silver Level

City of Taylorsville: Taylorsville also has an ordinance for new subdivisions to install lighting and sidewalks, an active lifestyle transportation component of their master transportation plan, and works with Safe Routes to School. The city also has a Healthy Taylorsville Committee which meets regularly to address ways to keep its residents active and healthy.

The winning cities not only considered their residents' health-related needs, but also set an example by adopting policies and programs to improve their own employees' health. Positive changes made in just one neighborhood can potentially benefit the larger community.

“As a culture, we tend to think of being healthy as a personal decision,” said Brett McIff, UDOH Healthy Communities Coordinator. “However, if you can step outside your door and have a safe and encouraging place to walk, with easy access to healthy food and interesting places to visit, it’s much easier to make those choices” added McIff.

For a more detailed description of the award program, please contact Brett McIff at bmciff@utah.gov or visit www.health.utah.gov/ahy.

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The mission of the Utah Department of Health is to protect the public's health through preventing avoidable illness, injury, disability and premature death, assuring access to affordable, quality health care, and promoting healthy lifestyles.